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SERVICE

USDA'S REPORT TO CONSUMERS

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE · OFFICE OF INFORMATION · WASHINGTON, D.C. 20250

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USDA PILOT FOOD PROGRAMS STUDIED DEC 29 1971

Report On Two Of Five Programs USDA has released details of a recent study of two of its five pilot food programs for low-income and welfare mothers and infants. The study, conducted by Cornell University for USDA's Food and Nutrition Service, reports on the pilot food certificate programs in Chicago, Illinois, and in Bibb County, Georgia. Other USDA pilot food certificate programs are operating in Brazos County, Texas, Yakima County, Washington, and the St. Johnsbury-Newport Welfare District, Vermont. Under the food certificate plan, each eligible woman receives \$5 worth of certificates per month during pregnancy and for one year after delivery. During that year, she receives another \$10 in certificates per month for milk, iron-fortified infant formulas, and baby cereals for each child up to one year old. Some results of the Cornell study indicate that infants up to 6 months of age in both participating groups and in control groups of non-participants had a average total consumption of milk plus formula about equal to consumption levels found in higher-income families. Average total consumption of milk plus formula for infants 6 through 12 months in all sample groups was greater than that found in higher-income population. The food certificate plan did not significantly increase milk and formula intakes by infants nor did the program appear to encourage substitution of commercially prepared infant formula for whole milk for infants 6 months to a year old. Thus, it did not contribute to the intakes of iron in this age group. The program was well accepted by participants with few difficulties reported in using the certificates. USDA officials are reviewing the report before deciding on the future of the experimental program.

PLENTIFUL FOODS LIST

June Plentifuls Make Rhyme and Reason. Songwriters have had great success with June. . . croon, moon, swoon. Perhaps it was a hungry librettist who thought of. . . spoon. For smart food shoppers, the rhyme for June is. . . boon; the reason is the money-saving ideas in this month's Plentiful Foods List. Topping the List are milk and dairy products, appropriate items to observe the nationwide celebration of "June Is Dairy Month." Other foods on the June List are broiler-fryers, eggs, dried peas, canned ripe olives, and potatoes and potato products. For July the Plentifuls will include turkeys, eggs, fresh plums, fresh vegetables, watermelons, rice, frozen and fresh salmon, and cranberry sauce and juice.



COME RAIN OR COME STAIN

Cottons That Repel and Resist. Wouldn't it be nice to have an all-cotton raincoat that is still water resistant even after repeated machine washings? Or, how about sailing togs of 100-percent cotton that not only repel water but resist oily stains? It might not be long before these marvels will be on the market. The "miracle" treatment for such garments is already being developed by the U.S. Department of Agriculture, and commercial firms are showing great interest in the process. Scientists at USDA's Agricultural Research Service in New Orleans have been working with chemicals called fluoro-carbons that can impart water repellency, stain resistance, or both, to cotton fabrics. A problem is that as a garment becomes more water repellent it becomes more difficult to launder. The scientists are looking for a happy balance: to make the treated garment a little less water repellent in order to make laundering practical. Although this will make the fabrics somewhat less resistant to water borne stains, they will still retain their oily-stain resistant qualities. Unlike water-repellent cotton finishes now on the market -- that cannot be laundered and must be renewed after cleaning -- the new finish will permit home laundering in ordinary detergents and will last the life of the fabric.

BRUSH UP ON YOUR PAINTING

Inside Tips On Interior Painting. Surface preparation is the most important part -- and may take the longest time -- of an attractive, long-lasting paint job. So advises a new USDA publication, "Interior Painting in Homes and Around the Farm." For many people, however, the hardest job may be choosing the color, shade, and type of paint from the wide range available on the market. In either case -- the preparing or the choosing -- the new bulletin can come to your aid. It tells how to choose the right paints for the job and how to apply them -- properly and safely. Included is a chart for selecting paints for use on walls, ceilings, and floors and for applying to masonry, metal, and wood surfaces. The publication points out some safety tips such as avoiding spontaneous combustion from oily rags and avoiding prolonged exposure to paint fumes which can be harmful to humans and pets, especially if you are a canary. Along with the do-it-yourself tips, the bulletin includes useful information when hiring a contractor to do the painting. Copies of "Interior Painting in Homes and Around the Farm" (G-184) may be ordered for 10 cents each from the Superintendent of Documents, U.S. Government Printing Office, Washington, D.C. 20402.

USDA POSTERS TELL ALL

About Meat and Poultry For You. Inspection, buying, and care of meat and poultry are subjects of a new set of posters developed by the U.S. Department of Agriculture. The set of 10 colorful posters, each measuring 15x20 inches, will be of special interest to teachers, leaders, and others engaged in consumer education work. The posters, which can be used individually or easily made into attractive table-top exhibits, tie in directly with five meat and poultry leaflets published by USDA. The poster sets are available for \$1.75 per set from: Superintendent of Documents, U.S. Government Printing Office, Washington, D.C. 20402. Ask for "Meat and Poultry Inspection Posters." The leaflets, also for sale by the Superintendent of Documents are: "Meat and Poultry -- Wholesome for You" (G-170) 10 cents; "Meat and Poultry -- Standards for You" (G-171) 10 cents; "Meat and Poultry -- Labeled for You" (G-172) 10 cents; "Meat and Poultry -- Clean for You" (G-173) 10 cents; "Meat and Poultry -- Care Tips for You" (G-174) 20 cents. Single copies of the five leaflets are free from the Office of Information, U.S. Department of Agriculture, Washington, D.C. 20250.

SUMMER FOOD PREVIEW

The start of the sunny season finds many shoppers with better incomes to go with **some** good buys in the pork and poultry departments.

The average family has more dollars to spend. Higher wages and Social Security benefits, wider distribution of food stamps, and reduced taxes are boosting "spend-ability."

For the entire year, USDA estimates that grocery store prices will average about 2 percent over 1970. Continued rise in the cost of eating out adds perhaps another percent to the overall food price rise this year. After declining late last year, retail food-store prices began rising, averaging about $1\frac{1}{2}$ percent higher this spring than last.

Over the summer, a little more increase is in store. Early summer prices will include unusually good buys in pork and poultry. But tightening supplies of these items, and seasonal increases in others, will cause prices to move upward through the summer.

Pork will remain a fine buy, considering it's summer, even with the upcoming seasonal increase. Eggs are much lower than a year ago, broilers remain in good supply, and turkeys, usually high this time of year, are going at Thanksgiving-special prices.

Beef and fish prices reflect brisk demand. Sales figures are telling a tale of heavy demand for beef; prices have moved up during the past few months. This summer, retail beef prices aren't likely to ease off. Look for buys in roasts, usually in slack demand during summer. Some can be sliced into steaks.

Japanese, Europeans, and Americans are gobbling fish. The world fish catch is running at maximum levels, but are not matching demand; our prices have jumped. Only a few frozen items remain in relative plentiful supply: salmon, flounder, ocean perch fillets, whiting. But while canned fish prices may go up a penny or two, trade inventories of canned tuna, salmon, and shrimp are generally ample. Maine sardine prices are likely to reflect limited quantity in coming months.

At the dairy counter earlier this year, prices rose for whole and skim milk, butter, American cheese, ice cream, and evaporated milk. Prices may increase a little over the rest of the year. Retail butter and cream prices may change least.

Some produce items will run relatively high during summer. At the produce counter, fresh tomato prices will begin declining seasonally in June. Carrot prices may drop a little from high spring levels; and cabbage remains quite reasonable. Sweet corn from Florida is reaching its harvesting peak now, but cantaloupes will be higher this summer than last, and celery and potatoes will rise seasonally, too. Banana prices are likely to be lower than last summer. There's a good supply of Valencia oranges, but higher prices because of demand. Higher fresh peach prices are due to a cold-slashed early crop. Processed fruit and vegetable prices will be up a little from last summer's levels.

Frozen lima beans, snap beans, green peas, and sweet corn all are costlier than a year ago due to smaller supplies and heavy demand. And you can add to the list canned and frozen orange juice, citrus juices, and apple and grape juices, too.

A few bright spots: Canned sauerkraut and peeled tomatoes are in ample supply. There are bargain supplies of frozen french fries for summer meals.

THINK SAFETY

It's Farm Safety Week. Safety is a good idea year-round, but it will get special emphasis July 25-31, proclaimed by President Nixon as National Farm Safety Week. Why stress farm safety? Agriculture is listed among the industries with the highest occupational risks to human life. The President's proclamation urges "farm families and all in the rural community to make every effort to reduce accidents occurring at work, home, in recreation, and on the highway." This is good advice even if you don't live on a farm. In fact, Farm Safety Week would be a dandy time for gardeners, and home owners as well as farmers to brush up on their safety practices -- such as wise use of pesticides. A new leaflet, "Pesticide Pointers," published cooperatively by the U.S. Department of Agriculture and the National Safety Council, includes twelve basic tips for avoiding pesticide accidents. Single copies are available free from the Office of Information, U. S. Department of Agriculture, Washington, D.C. 20250.

MILK. . . WHO NEEDS IT?

And How Much? Do you know how much milk a baby needs daily? A teenager? An adult? A nursing mother? Do you have to drink milk? Or, can you get your daily milk needs in other forms? The U.S. Department of Agriculture can answer these questions and can help you explain how to build nutritious family meals around milk. For instance, the slide set, "Basic Four Ways to Good Meals," tells how to cook with evaporated milk -- including step-by-step recipes for making main dishes -- discusses the basic four food groups, and shows how to work some of each into all family meals. Other titles for "how-to-do-it" presentations include "Recipes Using Non-Instant, Non-Fat Dry Milk and Other Donated Foods," "Food Value Stretchers," "Milk, Basic to Good Nutrition," "Milk the Magnificent," and "Non-Fat Dry Milk in Family Meals." Although the sets are designed primarily for instructors working with people using USDA donated foods, they are just as suitable for home economics classes and other consumer groups. The slide sets, each with an illustrated narrative guide, can be ordered for \$11.00 per set from the Photography Division, Office of Information, U.S. Department of Agriculture, Washington, D.C. 20250. All presentations are also available as filmstrips from Photo Lab, Inc., 3825 Georgia Avenue N.W., Washington, D.C. 20011, for \$5.50 each.

GREEN GROWS THE GRASS

Or The Henbit Or The Chickweed. Weeds are usually a minor problem in well-established, well-managed lawns. But when there's more to your lawn than grass, it may be necessary to use herbicides. Recommendations for herbicidal control of lawn weeds have been updated in a revised bulletin from the U.S. Department of Agriculture. The publication includes general information on herbicides, how to treat weed infestation, preplanting lawn treatments, and precautions in herbicide use. Fifteen of some of the most widespread or difficult-to-identify weeds are illustrated and information is given on the reaction of 35 widespread lawn weeds to commonly-used herbicides. "Lawn Weed Control with Herbicides" (G-123) is available for 15 cents a copy from the Superintendent of Documents, U.S. Government Printing Office, Washington, D.C. 20402.

SERVICE is a monthly newsletter of consumer interest. It is designed for those who report to the individual consumer rather than for mass distribution. For information about items in this issue, write: Lillie Vincent, Editor of Service, U.S. Department of Agriculture, Office of Information, Washington, D.C. 20250; telephone (202) DU8-5437. Please include your zipcode.